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UNCLAS VIENNA 000468

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EFIN AU](#)

SUBJECT: Austria Strongly Supports Kosovo IMF/WB Membership Bid

REF: State 0266

¶1. Post delivered reftel demarche to Dr. Edith Frauwallner (head of international affairs at Austria's MinFin) along with UK, French, and Italian embassy representatives and in coordination with the German embassy in Vienna.

¶2. MinFin rep replied that formal action rests with the Austrian National Bank, whose Governor Ewald Nowotny WILL vote in favor of Kosovo's membership bid and seek to influence other countries. Frauwallner described Austria as one of Kosovo's earliest and most steadfast supporters -- and willing to sway others if possible. For instance, FinMin Proell will soon meet Romania's finance minister and could conceivably raise the topic. Erhard Busek, former Special Coordinator of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, is also engaged on the issue.

¶3. GoA rep asked whom Austria might usefully "target" for lobbying on the membership bid. EconPol Counselor cited European countries who have recognized and/or are not actively opposed to an independent Kosovo. The UK Embassy rep cited Slovakia and asked if Austria could sound out Czech capacities for action given its government crisis. Frauwallner surmised that the Spring Meetings will provide more clarity.

¶4. Post learned separately that Austrian National Bank Governor Nowotny has submitted a written vote in favor of Kosovo's IMF application.

KILNER